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## INVASION AND INTERVENTION IN THE CARIBBEAN AREA

by

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## INVASION AND INTERVENTION IN THE CARIBBEAN AREA

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**F**OREIGN MINISTERS of the 21 American republics will face a task of exceptional difficulty when they meet at Santiago, Chile, August 12, to consider means of quieting the unrest that has been mounting in the region of the Caribbean Sea since Cuban revolutionists under Fidel Castro swept to power at the end of last year. The Council of the Organization of American States, which called the meeting by unanimous vote on July 13, said the situation in the Caribbean urgently required cooperative efforts for "greater realization of the objectives of peace and security, . . . exercise of representative government, and respect for human rights." The problem will be to devise effective action to those ends within the bounds of the basic inter-American policy of non-intervention in internal affairs.

The Caribbean question came before the O.A.S. Council, July 2, when the Dominican Republic accused Cuba and Venezuela of complicity in two invasions of its territory a fortnight earlier, and asked aid in repelling another assault which it charged was in preparation. The Dominican appeal was brought under the Inter-American Treaty of Mutual Assistance, concluded at Rio de Janeiro in 1947 to afford protection in cases of aggression. Prospects of action under that treaty threatened seriously to disrupt the machinery of inter-American cooperation, for Cuba and Venezuela at once declared they would not give entry to any group named to investigate the charges. The Dominican Republic agreed later to the alternative of consultation on the whole problem of Caribbean unrest.

### EFFECT OF CUBAN REVOLUTION ON EXILED LATINOS

Agreement to proceed in this manner averted a threatened break-up of the O.A.S. but made no easier the problem of resolving the basic conflicts underlying Caribbean tensions. Success of Fidel Castro's revolutionary movement in Cuba not only threw into sharper relief the continuing existence of dictatorships in certain other Latin

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American countries, notably the Dominican Republic; it also injected drama and stirred new hope in movements dedicated to restoration of democratic processes in the nations still deprived of them. Within a few months expeditions were launched against three countries—Nicaragua and Panama in addition to the Dominican Republic.<sup>1</sup>

All three offensives were stopped on the spot, but the situation remains disturbing for various reasons. Opposition to the dictatorship of Gen. Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, if not also to the regime in Nicaragua, seems more determined than ever and is not likely to be permanently held back by initial failure. The persisting unrest and confusion, moreover, are ready made for Communist agitators, whose influence in Cuba already has become a source of considerable concern in the United States.<sup>2</sup> Finally, the principles of inter-American cooperation, carefully nurtured and developed over the past quarter of a century, do not lend themselves to alleviation of the present situation. Stability in this area on its southern doorstep is of utmost importance to the United States. Yet direct action now of the kind employed in an earlier era might not achieve stability and would certainly gravely undermine, if not destroy, the foundations of cooperation between this country and all of Latin America.

#### ATTEMPTED INVASION OF PANAMA IN APRIL

The forces that engaged in the recent incursions in Caribbean countries were no larger than raiding parties, but size is not necessarily a gauge of importance in such affairs; Castro's invasion of eastern Cuba with 82 followers on Dec. 2, 1956, signaled the effective start of a revolutionary campaign that eventually put him in full control of the country. Although the invasions of Panama and Nicaragua a few weeks ago fizzled out quickly, they obviously alarmed the governments of those countries. There are indications that the later landings in the Dominican Republic, though promptly extinguished, were still more disturbing to the Trujillo regime.

<sup>1</sup> Although there has been considerable political unrest in Panama, the government of that country is not a dictatorship. Nor is Honduras, where a violent internal revolutionary attempt led by a former army officer was put down in mid-July, under dictatorial rule. However, the revolutionary fever prevalent in the Caribbean probably was a contributing factor in both cases, particularly that of Panama.

<sup>2</sup> Charges and counter-charges of Red influence in the Castro government have been flying fast. President Eisenhower said at his news conference, July 15, that such charges were "not always easy to prove" and that "the United States has made no such charges" but that it was "watching the whole . . . Caribbean area."

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A remote section of Panama's Caribbean coast was the scene late in April of the landing of some 90 Cubans—mercenaries reportedly hired in Cuba by agents of Roberto Arias, member of a wealthy and politically active Panamanian family at odds with that country's president, Ernesto de la Guardia, Jr. Even before the invaders had come ashore, Panama appealed to the Organization of American States. The O.A.S. Council, meeting in Washington on April 28, dispatched a five-man fact-finding team to Panama. Within a few days it arranged for surrender of the invaders, who had engaged in no hostilities, and recommended U.S. air and naval surveillance of the coast of Panama as a safeguard against additional landing attempts.

Although the fact-finders uncovered no evidence that the invading band had received the backing of any government, they suggested that the O.A.S. Council ask the Cuban government to "exhaust all measures to prevent a new invasion from being carried out." Castro already had told the press that participation of Cubans in the Panama expedition directly contravened his orders and the Cuban policy of non-intervention.

### **ABORTIVE INVASION OF NICARAGUA IN JUNE**

Around 100 exiles from Nicaragua who landed in that country by air from Costa Rica on June 1 were rounded up by Nicaraguan troops within a fortnight. The invaders, whose purpose was to overthrow the government of President Luis A. Somoza, were said to have the support of business, professional and other conservative elements opposed to the Somoza family's long rule in Nicaragua; if so, the support was not made effective.<sup>3</sup> In this case, as in that of the Panama invasion, the O.A.S. launched an inquiry but the investigating team, arriving on the spot simultaneously with capture of the invaders, found it unnecessary to recommend action.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The present president was elected in February 1957 to succeed his father, Gen. Anastasio Somoza, who was assassinated in September 1956 after 20 years in office. Gen. Anastasio Somoza, Jr., heads the Nicaraguan national guard. Although the brothers have introduced some democratic reforms, their name is still a symbol of dictatorship.

<sup>4</sup> The investigators left Washington June 14 and returned June 22. They visited Costa Rica and Honduras as well as Nicaragua, as President Somoza had asserted on June 16 that additional forces were getting ready to invade from the former countries. The Honduran government subsequently was reported to have broken up several attempts to invade Nicaragua from Honduras, in one case inflicting a number of casualties.

Some unofficial observers thought the Nicaraguan dissidents had received considerable aid and encouragement from adherents of Premier Castro of Cuba, of President Betancourt of Venezuela, and of former President Figueres of Costa Rica. Figueres was a long-time foe of Gen. Anastasio Somoza, Sr., who was president of Nicaragua from 1936 until his assassination in 1956. To the embarrassment of Costa Rican President Mario Echandi, who had tried to hew to a neutral line, the Costa Rican National Assembly on June 2 unanimously recorded its support of and sympathy for the Nicaraguan invaders; six days later it asked the United States to make certain that arms supplied to Latin American nations for hemispheric defense were not used by dictators to put down insurrections. Members of the Chamber of Deputies of Venezuela, like their colleagues in Costa Rica, voted unanimously on June 4 for a resolution backing "the people of Nicaragua in their fight for freedom."

#### ATTEMPTED INVASIONS OF DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

News reports of the invasion attempts in the Dominican Republic were meager and contradictory. According to a Dominican note to the O.A.S., 56 armed men landed by plane at a mountain airport on June 14. Landings from the sea were attempted at two points on the northern coast on June 20, one by a force of 54 men and the other by a band of 86 men. The groups were said to have been made up of Dominican exiles, Cubans, Venezuelans, Guatemalans and Puerto Ricans.<sup>5</sup> Both sets of invaders reportedly were given a savage reception by the Dominican armed forces and by machete-wielding peasants. Initial official announcements that the invading forces had been "completely exterminated" proved exaggerated, but the number of survivors in any case was small.

The Dominican government, complaining to the O.A.S. on July 2, charged that the invasions had been "carried out by armed groups organized, trained and equipped in the territory of the Republic of Cuba from where they departed." It accused Venezuela also of participating in preparation of the assaults. Venezuela had broken off relations with the Dominican Republic on June 12, two days before the first invasion, and Cuba followed suit on June 26. Both governments denied the Dominican charges, but Vene-

<sup>5</sup> Dominican authorities are prone to refer to Dominican exiles in Cuba as Cubans.

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zuela's foreign minister was quoted in press reports on July 3 as denouncing the Dominican dictatorship as "repugnant" and as declaring that the American republics should feel ashamed to permit its continued existence.

### **RIVAL REVOLUTIONARY FORCES; CASTRO'S POSITION**

Victory of the Cuban revolutionists last winter seemed to act as a catalyst, precipitating a contagious unrest in the Caribbean region. Three weeks after the New Year's Day ousting of Cuba's dictator, Gen. Fulgencio Batista, Cuba's new hero, Fidel Castro, journeyed to Caracas, Venezuela, where Romulo Betancourt, prominent South American liberal, had been elected president following the ousting of another military dictator a year earlier.<sup>6</sup> Before a special session of the lower chamber of the Venezuelan legislature on Jan. 24, 1959, Castro called on all freedom-loving Latin Americans to help overthrow the dictatorial regimes in the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Paraguay. Latin American liberals, assembled in Caracas for Betancourt's inauguration on Feb. 13, issued a declaration echoing Castro's condemnation of the governments of those countries.

Shortly after Castro and his adherents came to power, exiles from the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and also Haiti began to drift into Cuba. They found a welcome there, were given arms, and went into training for direct military action. According to Ruby H. Phillips, a *New York Times* correspondent in Cuba, it was no secret that recruits were being "enlisted in Havana and Santiago by a Caribbean revolutionary movement." She wrote on March 16: "The three dictatorships upon which attention is focused are those in the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Nicaragua. The recruits are said to be given the choice of where they will fight."

The united crusading front apparently then forming between young Fidel Castro and several older more experienced Caribbean liberal leaders seems subsequently to have been subjected to strain. The older leaders, while yielding nothing to the younger firebrands in detestation of dictatorship, appear to have been disturbed by some aspects of developments in Cuba. Robert M. Hallett, Assistant Amer-

<sup>6</sup> See "Revolutionary Ferment and Democratic Processes," *E.R.R.*, 1959 Vol. I, pp. 85-86.

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ican News Editor of the *Christian Science Monitor*, pointed out in a dispatch from Costa Rica on July 6 that:

Beneath political ferment in the Caribbean and Central America two distinct revolutionary currents are flowing today. . . . One is the dynamic surge of conspiracy and aggressive action in the wake of the Cuban revolution. . . . This Cuban movement has been marked by anti-Americanism and Communist infiltration. The other is the older, more mature, pro-Western ideological alignment headed by ex-President Figueres of Costa Rica, President Betancourt of Venezuela, and Luis Munoz Marin, Governor of Puerto Rico.

Hallett added that the two groups had "about come to a complete parting of the ways." The older men, he said, were "deeply concerned . . . that the Cuban movement, if it succeeds in helping to overthrow the dictatorships in the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua, may bring to power governments of extremist persuasions which would introduce the whole question of the East-West struggle into Pan American relationships."

Meanwhile, Castro appears to have found the responsibilities of government something of a check on foreign adventuring. At Santiago, Cuba, on March 12, for example, he said he would like to lead the fight to overthrow the Trujillo regime but could not do so while serving as premier of Cuba. When asked by *U.S. News & World Report* whether he would allow Cuba to be used as a base for military operations against the Dominican Republic and possibly other countries, Castro replied:

Trujillo is a danger to Cuba. Trujillo is a danger to Latin America. . . . However, we shall never accept or promote or support any action outside our national territory, because we respect the laws of other countries. Trujillo does not respect them. Trujillo has established a continental dictatorship. In a certain sense it is logical that a democratic government and we democratic Cubans would view with sympathy any movement against Trujillo, but for us to intervene directly in the problems of Santo Domingo—no.<sup>7</sup>

When Castro appeared before the American Society of Newspaper Editors in Washington, April 17, he said he supported the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other nations, but he said also that Cuba would offer hospitality and help to exiles from Latin American countries under dictatorship who hoped to overthrow the dictators in their homelands. One reason Castro gave for

<sup>7</sup> Copyrighted interview in *U.S. News & World Report*, March 16, 1959, p. 70.



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supporting the principle of non-intervention was to assure the integrity of his own country. Regulations recently drawn up for approval by the president of Cuba prescribe penalties ranging from 20 years in prison to death for organization of or participation in armed groups landing in Cuba to overthrow the government.<sup>8</sup>

Oswaldo Dorticos Torrado, said to have been chief author of the security regulations laid before President Manuel Urrutia Lleo, himself became president on July 19, after Urrutia had been charged with "near-treason" and been ousted by Castro. Press dispatches from Havana reported the arrest during the next few days of some 35 "anti-government plotters." They were accused of having planned to "sow panic and facilitate foreign invasion" of Cuba.

### UNITED STATES AND THE CARIBBEAN ARMS TRAFFIC

The United States has been the main source, in one way or another, of arms used both to support and to suppress Caribbean revolutionary movements. As a rule, existing governments recognized by Washington have found no bars raised to supply of their armed forces either through commercial purchases in the United States or through shipments under the U.S. military aid program. Insurrectionists have managed to obtain arms through illicit channels.

Washington's willingness to help arm Latin American military forces has led inevitably to anomalies. Under a general policy it is virtually impossible to make distinctions between democratic and dictatorial regimes, and different interpretations of arms aid objectives have been productive of seeming inconsistencies in government policy. Defense Secretary Neil H. McElroy, for example, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in the spring of 1958 that "The [arms] program for Latin America . . . is primarily for the purpose of maintenance of internal security."<sup>9</sup> But the late Secretary of State John Foster Dulles told a news conference, April 8, 1958, that the broad policy was to "allow arms to go to other countries primarily to meet international defense requirements—in this case [Latin America], the needs of hemispheric defense."

<sup>8</sup> Cuba's Minister of State, Raul Roa, charged, July 16, that an invasion of Cuba by 6,000 mercenaries was being prepared in the Dominican Republic.

<sup>9</sup> Congress added to the Mutual Security Act of 1958 a provision stipulating that "Internal security requirements shall not normally be the basis for military assistance programs to the American republics."

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President Eisenhower asked Congress to appropriate \$95.5 million for military aid to Latin American countries during the fiscal year 1960. This was cut to \$67 million in the foreign aid authorization bill now awaiting his signature. A Senate provision which would have earmarked about half the fund for an inter-American police force, if set up by the Organization of American States, was dropped from the bill before final passage.

The question of arms exports to the Caribbean, legal or illegal, has attracted most attention in the case of Cuba. Continuing shipments to the Batista regime aroused increasing protests as the Castro movement demonstrated growing power. The State Department, which administers munitions export licensing regulations, on March 14, 1958, finally imposed a complete embargo on arms shipments to Cuba.<sup>10</sup> In an explanatory statement last Jan. 15, two weeks after Castro came to power, the Department reiterated that U.S. military missions and arms had been sent to the Latin American republics solely in the interests of the common defense. As for Cuba, it said:

From the time when it became evident that Cuba was undergoing a revolution which had the support of a large segment of the population, the United States demonstrated its determination to avoid all possible involvement in Cuba's internal conflict by suspending all sales and shipments of combat arms to the Batista government. . . . In utilizing for the purpose of putting down the Cuban revolution any part of the equipment that had been provided under the agreement prior to the arms suspension . . . the government of Batista acted in disregard of the agreement and over the reiterated objections of the United States.

It is too much to expect that any government with its back to the wall will scrupulously refrain from using for its attempted survival any equipment at hand, whether or not it was supplied for another purpose. Similarly, determined revolutionists will go to almost any lengths to obtain means to pursue an objective which is itself outside the law. Despite numerous arms seizures in this country and arrests, of Americans as well as Cubans, in connection with attempts to ship munitions to the Cuban rebels in violation of U.S. neutrality laws and export regulations, it is apparent that generous amounts of supplies got through to the Castro forces.

<sup>10</sup> The embargo started with suspension of the license for a single shipment of rifles to the Batista government. The fact that a new policy had been initiated did not become public until April 2, 1958, when the State Department acknowledged that no further arms shipments to Cuba would be authorized while existing tension continued.

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## Changes in U.S. Policy in Caribbean Area

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REVOLT of Spain's colonies in Latin America early in the 19th century was warmly welcomed in the United States, and prompt recognition by this country of the independence of the new states evoked reciprocally cordial feelings. But after posting a warning in the form of the Monroe Doctrine to any European powers that might seek to colonize or re-colonize territories in the New World, the United States turned back to absorbing tasks of internal development. Except for a flare-up in 1895 over Great Britain's controversy with Venezuela concerning the borders of British Guiana, Washington for the most part kept out of Caribbean and other Latin American affairs until the Spanish-American War in the spring of 1898.

That conflict wrought great changes in the world outlook of the United States and had far-reaching repercussions throughout the Caribbean area. This country not only intervened in the Cuban revolt against Spain but soon adopted policies which resulted in active intervention in a number of Caribbean republics. Theodore Roosevelt's habit of speaking softly but carrying a big stick made U.S. influence felt, and frequently feared, all over the region.

### THREE DECADES OF A POLICY OF INTERVENTION

After intervening to help the Cubans win their independence, the United States remained in military occupation of Cuba until 1902, when its people appeared capable of maintaining their freedom and governing themselves. Precautions were taken, however, by insisting that Cuba accept the terms of the so-called Platt Amendment.

The Platt Amendment (to a U.S. Army appropriation bill), embodied in the Cuban constitution and in a treaty of 1903 with the United States, barred Cuba from entering into treaties with foreign powers that would impair its independence; accorded the United States the right to lease two naval stations; and, most important, gave this country the right to intervene "for the preservation of Cuban independence, the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty," and the discharge of certain general obligations.

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Political turbulence and resulting government instability brought intervention, under the Platt Amendment, and American occupation from 1906 to 1909. In 1911, during a Negro revolt, and in 1917, during World War I, a few companies of U.S. marines were dispatched to Cuba to assure maintenance of order. Gen. Enoch H. Crowder was sent to Havana as personal representative of President Wilson in 1921 to help settle an electoral dispute that threatened civil war, and he stayed on for two years to push through financial reforms. That ended formal U.S. intervention. Despite temptations to take a hand in 1932-33, when Cuban revolutionists sought intervention against the repressive Machado administration, the United States held aloof. A reordering of treaty relationships in 1934 finally brought elimination of the Platt Amendment during the first term of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The United States had a similar right of intervention in Panama until 1936 when a new treaty, relinquishing it, was signed. The Republic of Panama itself had come into existence in 1903 through U.S. intervention. Theodore Roosevelt boasted in later years "I took Panama." When a treaty negotiated with Colombia, granting the United States isthmian canal rights, failed of ratification by the Colombian Senate, a revolution was promoted in the Colombian state of Panama. The United States assured its success by informing Colombia, Nov. 11, 1903, that it would "oppose the landing of Colombian troops to suppress the insurrection."<sup>11</sup> A treaty with the new republic, which had already been recognized by Washington, was signed within the week.

#### ACTION UNDER MONROE DOCTRINE COROLLARY

Intervention in other Caribbean countries was carried out under a theory, formulated by T.R., which became known as the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. The United States had stood by, though somewhat uneasily, late in 1902 when Germany, Great Britain and Italy blockaded the ports of Venezuela in protest against that country's failure to pay foreign debts.<sup>12</sup> When a like situation threatened two years later in the Dominican Republic, Roosevelt decided to obviate European intervention by U.S. inter-

<sup>11</sup> Samuel Flagg Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States* (1936), pp. 514-518.

<sup>12</sup> The question eventually was settled by arbitration.

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vention. He declared in his annual message to Congress, Dec. 6, 1904, that "In the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of [chronic] wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power."

An agreement with the Dominican Republic a few months later provided that the United States would collect that country's customs, turn over 45 per cent of the customs receipts to the Dominican government, and distribute the remaining 55 per cent among foreign creditors. When Roosevelt submitted the agreement to the Senate for ratification, Feb. 15, 1905, he said: "The justification for the United States taking this burden and incurring this responsibility is to be found in the fact that it is incompatible with international equity for the United States to refuse to allow other powers to take the only means at their disposal of satisfying the claims of their creditors and yet to refuse, itself, to take any such steps."

Revolutionary disturbances eventually turned the customs intervention in the Dominican Republic into armed intervention. While U.S. marines policed the country, from 1916 to 1924, a new constitution was adopted, a public works program was launched, and fiscal, educational and sanitary reforms were instituted. A similar occupation of Haiti began earlier and lasted longer. Fear after the outbreak of World War I that Germany had designs on Haiti which, if accomplished, would menace the Panama Canal influenced President Wilson's decision to intervene when disorders and a complete breakdown of government authority occurred in 1915. U.S. marines stayed in Haiti until 1934.

Default of external loans, political turmoil, and defense considerations likewise played a part in the most protracted armed U.S. intervention in the Caribbean. This country in 1909 had given effective support to Nicaraguan revolutionists who in that year overthrew the current dictator. However, continued political disturbances brought in the marines in 1912, and they remained in Nicaragua with only a momentary break (in 1925) until 1933. The force was limited originally to a legation guard of 100 men, but it rose to 5,000 men in 1928 when the task was to supervise national elections.

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### RISE OF OPPOSITION TO INTERVENTIONIST POLICY

The late Prof. Thomas W. Palmer, Jr., of the University of Florida observed two years ago that American policymakers learned some valuable lessons from the interventions in Caribbean countries.

They learned that there was not much use in attempting to dictate the choices of political regimes. . . . The regime they preferred, perhaps more favorably disposed toward business interests, would become the target of Yankeeophobia and lose its internal support. It was . . . perhaps irrelevant for the United States to ascertain the attitudes of the "people" of these countries. Oligarchy controlled all activities. . . . Some of these ruling elements wanted American troops in the country, often to strengthen their own position against the opposition. For example, Rafael Trujillo used his position as chief of the American-fostered gendarmerie to gain undisputed possession of the Dominican Republic.<sup>13</sup>

American public opinion never was in wholehearted support of the Caribbean interventions, but Washington continued to follow the policy in the face of mounting Latin American opposition after World War I. When strong protests were voiced at the Pan American Conference at Havana in 1928, former Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes, who headed the U.S. delegation, vigorously defended the right of a nation under international law to protect the lives and property of its citizens abroad when such protection could not be given by the foreign country concerned. Hughes said in an address before the American Chamber of Commerce in Havana:

We would leave Haiti at any time that we had reasonable expectations of stability. . . . We are at this moment in Nicaragua; but what we are doing there and the commitments we have made are at the request of both parties and in the interest of peace and order and a fair election. We have no desire to stay. We entered to meet an imperative but temporary exigency.

Changes in the Latin American policy of the United States began during the administration of Herbert Hoover. One of Hoover's early acts was to revert to the recognition policy which had been followed before Wilson introduced the "legitimist" doctrine, under which recognition was withheld from governments attaining power by other than legal means. As J. Fred Rippy, professor of history at the University of Chicago, has commented: "One of the mistakes of our early period of intervention was that of frown-

<sup>13</sup> Thomas W. Palmer, Jr., *Search for a Latin American Policy* (1957), pp. 49-50.

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ing upon revolutions without fully realizing that the peoples of Latin America were frequently deprived of the use of the democratic device of free elections, the only other means of determining policies and selecting personnel."<sup>14</sup>

Abandonment of the Wilson policy in 1930 had the effect of ameliorating relations with Latin America, for the Hoover administration extended recognition to various governments there that had come into power by revolutionary means. Once again the general test for recognition was control of the government with the apparent consent of the people, and willingness and ability to discharge international obligations.<sup>15</sup>

Further reorientation of U.S. policy in the Caribbean was foreshadowed in 1930 by publication of a memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine by J. Reuben Clark, a former Under Secretary of State. The Clark memorandum advanced the opinion that the Roosevelt Corollary was not justified "by the terms of the Monroe Doctrine, however much it may be justified by application of the doctrine of self-preservation." Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson accepted this thesis in 1931 when he announced that, despite recent losses of American lives at the hands of revolutionary forces in Nicaragua, the United States would not send in more marines or be responsible for general protection of American citizens in that country. Instead, Americans were warned that they remained in danger areas at their own risk. The marines were withdrawn from Nicaragua a few weeks before Hoover left office. It remained for the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration to carry out final liquidation of the policy of armed intervention in Latin America.

#### GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY AND NON-INTERVENTION

The Good Neighbor policy, which President Roosevelt enunciated in his first inaugural address, at once put a changed spirit into United States relations with Latin America. Refusal to intervene in the disturbed situation existing in Cuba at the time Roosevelt took office, abrogation of the Platt Amendment the following year, and withdrawal of the last marine detachment from Haiti went to

<sup>14</sup> J. Fred Rippy, *Globe and Hemisphere* (1958), pp. 219-220.

<sup>15</sup> The new recognition policy was not applied to the five Central American countries until 1934, when a treaty by which they had agreed not to recognize revolutionary governments was denounced. See "Diplomatic Recognition," *E.R.R.*, 1944 Vol. 1, pp. 106-109.



prove the sincerity of the administration in pursuit of the new policy. Most important of all, relinquishment of any right of intervention was put on the record in the form of inter-American treaty law. A Convention on the Rights and Duties of States, drawn up at the Inter-American Conference at Montevideo in 1933 and ratified by the United States, included the following declarations:

No state has the right to intervene in the internal or external affairs of another.

The territory of a state is inviolable and may not be the object of military occupation nor of other measures of force imposed by another state directly or indirectly or for any motive whatever even temporarily.

The principle of non-intervention was reaffirmed at the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace, held at Buenos Aires in 1936 and attended by President Roosevelt himself. That conference, in addition to codifying existing inter-American treaties and obligations, established the obligation of the American republics to consult together in situations menacing peace. The Inter-American Conference at Lima in 1938 provided a method of implementing the pledge of consultation. The unanimously approved Declaration of Lima called for consultations through meetings of foreign ministers and voiced the determination of the American republics to take coordinated action to "make effective their solidarity."<sup>16</sup>

#### INDIRECT INTERVENTION IN GUATEMALA IN 1954

Deviation on the part of the United States from the principles of non-intervention and collective action was suspected five years ago in connection with the toppling of a leftist regime in Guatemala. Nothing like the armed interventions of earlier days occurred, but many persons agree with the assertion of one observer that the government of President Jacobo Arbenz Guzman was unseated "with encouragement and assistance from the United States."<sup>17</sup>

Communist infiltration in Latin America had been a matter of growing concern to the United States and to Latin American countries themselves. The concern became

<sup>16</sup> The declaration said it was "understood that the governments of the American republics will act independently in their individual capacity, recognizing fully their juridical equality as sovereign states."

<sup>17</sup> J. Fred Rippy, *Latin America* (1958), p. 421. Philip B. Taylor, Jr., of the University of Michigan wrote, after exhaustively reviewing the available evidence, that "The conclusion that the United States played an important part in the struggle in Guatemala seems inescapable."—"The Guatemalan Affair: A Critique of United States Foreign Policy," *American Political Science Review*, September 1956, p. 797.



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acute in the case of Guatemala when that country fell under the control of a government which seemed to be in effect a Soviet puppet.

Gen. Jorge Ubico, Guatemala's military dictator, had been overthrown in 1944 by a nationalistic group which advocated social reforms. The succeeding government of President Juan Jose Arevalo, in office until 1951, was of a liberal but non-Communist stamp. However, Guatemalan Communists gained strength by aggressively supporting the objectives of the 1944 revolution. When Arbenz succeeded Arevalo in the presidency, he was forced to depend increasingly on Communist political support. A popular land reform law, put through in 1952 with Communist support, further increased the influence of the Reds.

A report on the situation by the National Planning Association at the end of 1953 asserted that "The Guatemalan Communists have been able to entrench themselves in the key organs of state power . . . through a well-managed conspiracy unwittingly helped by the non-Communists and ineffectually opposed by the anti-Communists." What to do about the situation posed a serious dilemma for the inter-American community in view of its commitment to non-intervention. When a consignment of Czech arms was shipped to Guatemala via Poland in May 1954, neighboring Nicaragua took fright and called for a meeting of American foreign ministers under the Rio Treaty. A session had been scheduled for July 7 when, on June 18, Guatemala was invaded from Honduras by an expedition led by an exiled officer of the Guatemalan army, Col. Carlos Castillo Armas.

#### INEFFECTIVE APPEALS TO U.N. AND O.A.S.

The Arbenz government immediately appealed to both the Organization of American States and the United Nations Security Council for aid to repel aggression. Later it withdrew the appeal to O.A.S., and the Soviet Union vetoed a Security Council resolution to refer the matter to O.A.S. The United States took the position, in the Security Council, that Guatemala was not a victim of aggression because the incident was in the nature of a civil war. That question became academic when Castillo Armas ousted the Arbenz government at the end of June.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Castillo Armas served as head of the new government until assassinated in July 1957.

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## Collective Security and Latin Dictators

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ARRANGEMENTS for inter-American defense and for mutual aid against aggression, improvised during World War II, were put on a permanent and formal basis after the war. An important step in that direction was taken Sept. 1, 1947, when the 21 republics signed at Rio de Janeiro the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance. The Rio Treaty authorized immediate extension of individual aid to a victim of aggression and provided for collective imposition against the aggressor of sanctions ordered by a two-thirds vote of the American foreign ministers. Imposition of sanctions so ordered was made mandatory "with the sole exception that no state shall be required to use armed force without its consent."

The system of collective security was completed, during the Inter-American Conference at Bogota in 1948, by establishment of the Organization of American States as a "regional arrangement" of the kind specifically sanctioned by the Charter of the United Nations. The O.A.S. virtually absorbed the old Pan American Union and greatly extended its functions. The O.A.S. Charter reaffirmed the accepted principles of inter-American relationships, including the principle of non-intervention. It authorized consultative meetings of foreign ministers to consider not only cases brought under the Rio Treaty but also any "problems of an urgent nature and of common interest to the American states." The O.A.S. Council was empowered to "serve provisionally as the organ of consultation" in cases of armed attack.

### COLLECTIVE SECURITY PACTS AND THE STATUS QUO

A policy of non-intervention in internal affairs, in combination with a system of collective security against external aggression, tends to buttress incumbent governments that are strong enough to withstand assaults by domestic foes. The principles of non-intervention and collective security, therefore, if scrupulously lived up to, are apt to work in favor of the status quo and to the advantage of dictatorial regimes.

The President's brother, Milton S. Eisenhower, pointed out last January, after his return from a study mission to

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Central America, that a "gross misconception" was being "cleverly fostered by Communist agitators" in that part of the world. "Despite our adherence to a policy of non-intervention," Eisenhower said, "we are charged with supporting Latin American dictators in the face of a strong trend toward freedom and democratic government." He accordingly stressed the importance, as one means of improving hemisphere relations, of avoiding even the appearance of supporting dictators while at the same time maintaining the policy of non-intervention.

It has been observed that "Although the Washington authorities may sometimes have been too 'chummy' with despots, it may be fairly assumed that neither [President] Eisenhower nor any of his predecessors have dealt harmoniously with such rulers because they approved this type of government but rather because they actually felt that they had no better alternative." One result, however, has been "the fostering of a demand—both in the United States among the 'liberals' and in . . . [Latin American] countries among those opposed to incumbent dictators . . .—for the resumption of intervention against despots and in favor of groups supposed to be devotees of more democratic government."<sup>19</sup>

Assistant Secretary of State William B. Macomber, Jr., pointed out in a letter to Sen. Jacob K. Javits (R N.Y.) last March 17 that the O.A.S. Charter "states that inter-American solidarity calls for the effective exercise of representative democracy." Macomber added that "U.S. support of representative democracy must, of course, be within the principle of non-intervention," but he went on to say: "There are . . . ways in which the United States can and does support and promote democracy without violating the principle of non-intervention: For example, by aiding in the maintenance of peace and security, by helping create the economic and social conditions under which democratic processes can be strengthened, as well as by continuing ourselves to follow democratic traditions."

It is doubtful whether such means of supporting and promoting democracy would have appeal for persons striving to overturn dictatorial regimes. Fidel Castro complained, before the American Society of Newspaper Editors

<sup>19</sup> J. Fred Rippy, *Globe and Hemisphere* (1958), p. 207 and p. 221.

last April, that everyone wants to forbid exiles to do anything, while nobody does anything for them. He observed, in addition, that "International organizations say people have the right to govern themselves but do not do anything to establish that right."<sup>20</sup>

The Dominican Republic's ambassador at Washington, appearing before the Council of the O.A.S. on July 6, insisted that his country was entitled to the same protection and consideration the organization had given to other members whose territory had been invaded or threatened with invasion. The response to that plea by the representatives of Cuba and Venezuela was that human rights transcended the rights of the Dominican government and that the O.A.S. could not be expected to assist a dictatorship like that of Gen. Trujillo.

However, the government of the Dominican Republic occupies legally the same position as that of the government of any other O.A.S. member, and it is difficult to see how an acceptable formula for differential treatment could be devised. To allow intervention to enforce human or individual rights might well create more problems than it would solve. Paradoxically, revolution from within appears to be the only legitimate form of direct action—legitimate under the rules of the hemispheric community—to drive Latin American dictators out of office.

<sup>20</sup> The authors of a Brookings Institution study of the United Nations have asserted that that organization has been "an important instrument of orderly change." Although it "has not satisfied all demands made on it for the modification of the existing order, . . . it has been a means by which public opinion has been mobilized and pressure has been exercised in support of the goals set by the Charter."—Leland M. Goodrich and Anne F. Simons, *The United Nations and the Maintenance of International Peace and Security* (1955), p. 65.



